

From: Virginia Metze
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/27/02 1:23pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I urge that you stop the persecution of Microsoft and end any further punishment of this company which has succeeded through its own merits and not because of tough business practices.

When I try to do business with any other company, I am again amazed how well Microsoft does in its support to customers, and how badly other companies are doing.

I believe that Microsoft is a monopoly not because it has been "evil" but because it has done well and has won the support of its customers. I will not buy another operating system, and I have resented the efforts which have tried to keep me from enjoying the operating system of my choice.

I would also like to point out that if Microsoft attempts to lower prices, there are actually complaints that it is taking advantage of its monopoly position to drive others out of business! Yet, its very modest prices cause others to complain that they are overcharging consumers. This is so very ludicrous, I can't believe it. I for one felt that the 1995 consent decree was wrong; the justice department should not have pursued it against Microsoft. Everyone I knew got Netscape free at the time and it was their intention to only charge for server software. I could probably dig up email from Marc Andreessen to that effect even still. Yet because Microsoft, which paid for the license for Mosaic, tried to put the browser in the operating system, we all had to pay for Microsoft Plus!

I believe that it was an erroneous finding that Microsoft was an "illegal monopoly." I am shocked that the court found against Microsoft on this basis. Furthermore as I understand it, Judge Penrose Jackson found it was an illegal monopoly as a matter of "fact" rather than of "law", which I would have thought such a finding would be. This of course would be because it is traditionally the case that an appeals court will not overturn findings of fact. In this case they should have done so.

I am also gravely concerned about the "open source" movement. I have seen good products driven out of the market by inferior "free" products which are difficult to use and maintain. Yet because they are free they take just enough of the market that people will not buy the better product. I think that it is wrong to encourage "open source." The punishment of Microsoft and any efforts to increase their cost of doing business by endless lawsuits and other harassment will give impetus to

the free source movement.

I have worked with computers since 1961, and I can assure you that open source will not work.

I am very concerned to see huge markets abandoning Microsoft products and going to the "free" operating system Linux, which came out of the Scandinavian countries and was supported by the Free Software Foundation, which is a TAX-EXEMPT CHARITABLE institution. I also urge that you end the tax-exempt status of the Free Software Foundation. There is no reason that I should be supporting them by paying more taxes in order that they do something that helps to destroy the American economy. I even heard that the FSF got donations from Russian communists, but I do not know if this is true.

More and more servers in countries such as China, Korea and other places are going to using Linux because it can be freely copied. I do not want my tax dollars used to put more Americans out of work and put more pressure on the American economy.

Many segments of the American technology economy will not improve until the suit against Microsoft is ended. I am particularly ticked off at the states who pretend to be representing their people but are probably only representing a few companies in their state. I believe it is unconscionable that these states are being allowed to continue to spend millions of tax paper money in an effort to destroy the best software engineering company that we have.

I understand that Microsoft has agreed to go along with the settlement. I feel that the settlement is too tough and actually Microsoft should not even have agreed to go along. I am sure it did so just to end uncertainty in the financial markets and the consumer marketplace. That was very noble of them.

I speak, though they do not know it, for the millions of Microsoft customers around the country who do not even know that their favorite company is "in trouble" or they would be supporting them.

So, please give this letter a little more weight than you otherwise might, because they have very few people speaking for them; in some cases, not even their own state's attorney general.

Thank you for your patience, in the event that you have made it to the end.

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